

HISTORICAL
ENCYCLOPEDIA
OF
ILLINOIS

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AND HISTORY OF
SCHUYLER COUNTY

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ERWIN, Lewis D.—During the summer of 1839 Lewis D. Erwin came overland from Toledo, Ohio, to Schuyler County, Ill., which since has been his home, and where for many years he has engaged in general farming and stock raising. He was born in Plattsburg, Clinton County, N. Y., July 1, 1815, and was educated in the public schools of New York, Ohio and Illinois. He is of a generation of whom there are now few living in any part of the country, for in 1906 he had passed the ninety-third mile post of his earthly pilgrimage, and few survived with whom he could renew the incidents which crowded his youth and early manhood. For the past fifty-five years he has lived in the same house in Rushville, and his pleasant face and kindly manner have been as familiar to the people of the town as are the many landmarks which indicate the transformation which has passed before his eyes.

The remote ancestors of Mr. Erwin were Scotch-Irish on the paternal side, and presumably German on the distaff side of the house. His paternal great-grandfather came from the North of Ireland in 1730, and located in Newark, N. J., where David Erwin, the paternal grandfather was born, and where the latter married Catherine Munson. Cornelius M. Erwin, son of David, and father of Lewis B., was born after his parent's removal to Fairhaven, Vt., and there he married Lucinda Fairman, a native of Rutland, Vt., and daughter of James Fairman, supposed to be of German ancestry. Both sides of the family were represented in the great struggle for American independence begun in 1776. David Erwin enlisted under the banner of Washington at the age of eighteen, and among his martial experiences crossed the Delaware with the great commander on that memorable Christmas night. James Fairman also was a soldier in the Revolution, enlisting from Vermont, and serving in three different regiments of the Colonial army.

Lewis D. Erwin established a home of his own in Schuyler County, November 12, 1843, marrying Elvira Wells, who was born in Henrietta, Lorain County, Ohio, and educated in the public schools of Illinois. Mr. and Mrs. Erwin are the parents of the following children: David Douglas, Catherine P., Mathilda, Eliza, Elizabeth L., Emma, Lewis D., Jr., George Lemuel, Anna E., Sophia Bessie and Edward H. Mr. Erwin is a Democrat in politics, a Presbyterian in religion, and fraternally a Mason. His heart still is young, his interests many sided, and his outlook upon life broad and hopeful. He has walked always close to the heart of truth and integrity, and his richest legacy to those who shall succeed him is the confidence and good will of his fellow men.

FOOTE, George H.—The manufacture of woolen goods constitutes an important, if not extensive, commercial resource of Schuyler County, and the promotion of the industry has enlisted the brain, energy and lifelong activity of some of its foremost citizens. Chief among those who, at present, sustain an enviable reputation as manufacturers of this commodity is George H. Foote, a

man of broad general experience, and thirty-two years of whose life has been devoted to his present business. Mr. Foote is the manager of the Rushville Woolen Mills, and one of the best known, most progressive and dependable commercial factors in the community. He comes honestly by his ability and inclination, for his father, John Foote, the establisher of the present mills, was an early and very prominent local manufacturer, and a resume of his life may be found elsewhere in this work.

George H. Foote was born in Eastern New Hampshire, July 9, 1861, and as a lad was taken by his parents to Charlestown, same State, where he acquired his primary education in the public schools. Subsequently removal was made to Otsego, Mich., and later to Rock Island, Ill., and from there to Rushville, where in 1874 George H. went to work in the Rushville Woolen Mills, of which his father was boss carder. In 1876 John Foote established the Rushville Hosiery Mills, in which his son was installed as manager and bookkeeper, a position which he since has maintained with credit to himself and the community. The mills are in a prosperous condition, and their products are known and used throughout a large area of country. They are equipped with the best modern machinery, and give employment to about twelve people the year round, extra hands being required in rush seasons.

By his marriage, in 1884, to Susan Weber, Mr. Foote became allied with another woolen manufacturing family, John Weber, the father of Mrs. Foote, being the pioneer of the business in Schuyler County. Mr. and Mrs. Foote became the parents of two children: George, who died at the age of eight years; and Edna, wife of Peter Olson, of Rushville, who has one child. Mr. Foote has taken a keen interest in Republican politics for many years, and has served as Alderman of the Third Ward, Rushville, several terms. He is socially connected with the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, the Knights of Pythias and the Modern Woodmen of America. With his wife he is a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and for several years has been an official in the same. He is regarded as a man of business integrity and sound judgment, and as a friend of education, progress, social purity and honest municipal control.

FOOTE, John, (deceased.)—The Rushville Hosiery Factory was in continuous operation under the same management from the time of its establishment, in 1876, by John Foote, until the date of his death in 1906. The results achieved were such as might have been expected from a man of extended experience and thorough knowledge of the details of his business. Behind the success of Mr. Foote were the thought and labor of generations of his family as weavers and manufacturers of fabrics. He was born January 17, 1827, in Leeds, Yorkshire, Eng., the fifth city in population, and the chief woolen manufacturing center of England. While still